

REGIONAL ASPECTS OF SECURITY

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BALTIC-BLACK SEA REGION AS A RESILIENT REGION: POLITICAL AND SECURITY ASPECTS

INTRODUCTION

Resilience becomes the concept widely used in public policy and international relations academic discourses addressing generally to the ability of political, legal and economic systems to respond to various disturbances. Different disciplines have proposed different definitions and understandings of resilience. While resilience is an important concept in contemporary governance, assessments of its impact are contested. There is clear evidence of its influence across a range of policy discourses from security to finance. J. Pugh (Pugh, 2014: 314) notes that although there is much divergence across sectors, resilience generally refers to a capacity to respond to change(s) such that an entity continues to function. According to O. Corry (Corry, 2014: 258), at its core, resilience attempts to manage systemic-level uncertainty. Steaming from engineering and being applied in ecology, psychology and sociology the concept of resilience becomes focal point in the contemporary international relations studies. The term refers merely to the contexts where resilience is a key concept to analyze the behaviour of societies, their political, legal and economic systems suffering from external shocks on their way to achieve stability. As J. Ruhl (Ruhl, 2011) (based on Holling's attitude) argues, in recovering from shocks societies merely pursue two basic approaches to respond to disturbances which depend as to the stabilization aims: either to retain to previous state of arts (to get back to "old equilibrium," engineering resilience) or to adapt to new realities ("thus to create a new equilibrium," ecological resilience). Based upon the initial aims societies tend to develop their resilience strategies taking into account resources needed. Thematic fields where resilience is applied range from health studies, work relations, urban planning, disaster recovering, environmental issues, sustainability and growth debates, security studies, international institutions and global studies, legal systems and communication studies.

In January 2013 resilience was declared by Time magazine as the buzzword of the year. The United Nations (2015), the International Monetary Fund (IMF 2015) and the World Bank (2015), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2014) have all made resilience a top priority. In 2013 the first academic journal examining Resilience in international relations was launched by D. Chandler (Chandler, 2007). Resilience is now key in fields as diverse as geography and international politics (Walker, Cooper, 2011; Grove, 2018; Welsh, 2014), economics (International Monetary Fund, 2015; Chandler, 2007), climate change (World Bank, 2015), development (The United Nations, 2015), community development (OECD, 2014), security (Chandler, 2007), and terrorism (Coaffee, Wood, 2006).

Both simultaneous furthering of the European Union to the East and spreading of influence and growth in Russia's ambitions towards Eastern Europe are increasing the tension and creating new rift lines. The stability of both the Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian systems depends on the countries of the Baltic-Black Sea region – the “axis of Eurasia.” Baltic States, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania, Hungary, Ukraine, Belarus will in fact today and in the future determine the structure of Eurasian security for decades. Strong strategic position and influence in these countries, according to H. Mackinder, provide opportunities for establishing dominance over Hartland (i.e the core of Eurasia) and the world at large.

By its nature the BBSR is still a volatile and vague idea ranging between the Inter-marium concept, where the countries involved create a confederation, until proposed in 2016 by Croatia Trimarium and in 2017 by Ukraine Baltic-Black Sea Union, but it seems to build-up resilience-fostering practices to societies, communities and people living therein. Geographically, the Baltic-Black Sea region is at the epicenter of the intersection of the axes of geostrategic interests of the world and is an integral part of the European and Eurasian space, and therefore it must determine its proper place and role, taking into account all threats and challenges, both internal and external. This contribution seeks to analyze the BBSR as the governance phenomenon and address its resilience potential for ensuring security and stability in the region in the case when the interstate cooperation is not institutionalized multilaterally.

So the following question arises: Can the Baltic-Black Sea Region become a resilient region in terms of political and security aspects?

RESILIENCE, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: DEFINITIONS AND MAIN APPROACHES

Initially, the term “resilience” was proposed to be understood as the ability of systems to withstand fluctuations in parameters as a result of exposure. Over times it has acquired different interpretations and meanings: e.g. the Cambridge Dictionary defines it as follows: “1) the ability to be happy, successful, etc. again after something difficult or bad has happened; 2) the ability of a substance to return to its usual shape after being bent, stretched, or pressed; 3) the quality of being able to return quickly to a previous good condition after problems” (*The Cambridge Dictionary*, 2020). The Oxford Dictionary follows almost the same approach defining resilience as: “1) the ability of

people or things to recover quickly after something unpleasant, such as shock, injury, etc.; 2) the ability of a substance to return to its original shape after it has been bent, stretched or pressed” (*The Oxford Dictionary*, 2020).

For the first time the term “resilience” was used by C. S. Holling in his paper ‘Resilience and stability of ecological systems’ published in 1973, who defined resilience as “the persistence of relationships within a system” and “the ability of these systems to absorb changes of state variables, driving variables, and parameters, and still persist (Holling, 1973: 17) ... As the author of this concept, C. S. Holling, noted, a system can have high resilience, but low stability, which is especially characteristic of complex systems. Over time, the academic term “resilience” has become a concept widely spread in psychology, geography, economics and social science. F. Brand and K. Jax (Brand, Jax, 2007), who analyzed the meanings in which the term was used in the most important scientific works since the beginning of the 1970s, define that the term resilience fall into three categories and 10 classes.

Although political science has not exploited the term for many years, the situation has changed drastically lately. Political science has begun to employ the term “resilience” in various aspects: e.g. to describe the actions employed by individuals and groups in the face of economic liberalization, labour market reforms, and public service reforms (Kong, 2006; Schneider, 2008); to highlight the positive influence of resilience on individuals caught up in violent conflicts (Davies, 2012; Williams, 2013); to define the role of resilience in counter-terrorism strategies (Schoon, 2006; Coaffee, Wood, 2006). Thus, this term has been applied in different contexts and perspectives, showing its ability to describe complex political and social processes and such flexibility became the conceptual advantage of resilience per se.

Social sciences disciplines give resilience quite broad interpretations, besides taking into account a specific social context. In particular, Ph. Bourbeau views it as “a process of structured adaptations that a society or an individual is facing in the face of endogenous or exogenous shocks” (Bourbeau, 2017). In his opinion, interest in the initially purely ecological concept on the part of representatives of other branches of knowledge led to the erosion of its meaning and content. From a holistic content (descriptive concept) resilience has evolved into a boundary object. The latter, on the one hand, facilitates communication between different disciplines, and also promotes an even more active penetration of the term into political practice. On the other hand, this does not form a unified approach to resilience. The appearance of consensus is created, however, in practice, each gives the concept the desired meaning. This affects the prospects for the scientific development of the concept, and its applied effectiveness. In this sense, resilience follows the path followed by the concept of sustainable development (Bourbeau, 2017).

M. Welsh explains: “Resilience is primarily conceived as the property that captures the capacity of the entity to anticipate, adapt to and recover from the event such that it resumes its original configuration, shape, functional relationships or trajectory afterwards. The linking of social and ecological systems and integration of complexity theory produces a model of interlinked systems in continual adaptive cycles of growth, accumulation, restructuring and renewal...” (Welsh, 2014: 16).

Resilience is often considered in the context of finding an adequate response to interconnected and difficult to predict challenges – from cyberattacks to floods. At

the same time, as in the concept of “risk society” by W. Beck, the point is not only to eliminate threats, but to learn how to live with risks. According to this logic, risk is not a rare emergency, but part of everyday life (Beck, 1992).

The resilience as an immanent characteristic of any system from understanding resilience in broad sense is the qualitative indicator of relations among system elements internally and externally. In the absence of such a quality, the system simply ceases to exist. An important element associated with this aspect is the principle of emergence. In accordance with it, the concept of a system is not limited to the number of its components, but includes a number of characteristics that arise during their interaction. When considering the functioning of resilience, anything can act as a system and its subsystems – from the world-system to individual social phenomena. The resilience is linked to risk management and mitigation as well as to resources accumulation and distribution within the system. In this regard, it is important to separate resilience from the securitization process. The idea of securitization consists of the discursive positioning of an object as being in existential danger with the need to activate emergency political measures to save it (Buzan et al., 1998).

Academic concepts of resilience focuses not only on threats, but on the systemic resources to overcome them. Resilience exists, since any working system has its own resources for recovery and adaptation to new conditions. There is a complex connection at both conceptual and practical levels between resilience and securitization. There are no absolutely resilient or non-resilient systems/societies; maintaining resilience is a process as well as the stage of securitization. While studying resilience, we may record how the processes of adaptation of society to shocks are changing depending on time and place (Bourbeau, 2015).

The theory of resilience allows to appeal to phenomena on different levels and scales, from the global system to national states, from local communities to an individual. In connection with this complexity, S. Walklate and his co-authors distinguish several levels of implementation of resilience depending on the scale: global, regional, national, institutional, communal, family and, finally, individual (Walklate et al., 2013). But a thread on the global level in the paradigm of resilience cannot be presented as external to the nation state as the global level is thought to be a single system in an expanded sense only with various interconnected subsystems. Within the single system, all elements are interdependent. A challenge originated in one part of it, for example, at the global level, can affect regions/states/communities in other parts of the world.

The resilience is linked to the transition from traditional security policies to new approaches to risk management with the phenomenon of new management (new governmentality). According to M. Foucault (Foucault, 2008), its essence lies in the change of Western approaches to management through the rationalization of managers’ perceptions of essence of management. In this vein, the resilience is understood as the form of this newest management emphasising on the need to develop the internal qualities of social systems in the face of the inevitable and unpredictable threats, thereby rationally managing available resources as the traditional approach was focused mainly on the fight against known threats and enemies by eliminating them (Foucault, 2008). The state involves business, society, local communities and individuals in the management

process of risks, reducing their role, where it is more effective, to coordination of joint efforts.

The concept of resilience has been also employed by international organizations supplementing very often the sustainable development debate. Within the UN system the need to strengthen resilience of developing countries in the face of crises in order to prevent the loss of their progress with international assistance has been particularly addressed. Under the influence of major international crises, new approaches to resilience were formed, e.g. the global economic crisis has generated discussions about economic resilience, the aggravation of the problem of international terrorism has contributed to the use of this term in the context of the ideological and value cohesion of liberal democracies in the face of the terrorist threat.

In the UN system the concept of resilience is presented in a variety of forms – from resilience in cases of natural disasters to economic resilience. As expected, least of all the concept is presented in the discourse of political structures such as the General Assembly and the Security Council. Out of all Security Council resolutions for 2013–2017, only two mentioned resilience, without any explanation and disclosure of its essence. In 2014, local community resilience was presented (UN Security Council, 2014), and in 2017, resilience was used in the context of countering international terrorism (UN Security Council, 2017). Significantly more often, even in relation to security issues, the traditional category of sustainability is used.

One of the key UN initiatives testifying the conceptual nature of the resilience in the organization's discourse is the Sustainable Development Goals. Resilience does not replace the concept of sustainable development, but supplements it, somewhat shifting the emphasis to the need for more careful work of the UN system organizations with internal resources and capabilities of global governance facilities. As the UN Secretary-General notes, together, the three interlinked pillars of the United Nations (peace, sustainable development and human rights) “constitute the foundation of resilience and cohesive societies” (United Nations Secretary-General, 2016b).

Besides the UN discourse on resilience, this term is employed at the regional level, particularly within the EU: the EU institutions have used it in environmental policy and economics since the 1980s. A more active penetration of the concept of resilience into the discourse and political practice of the EU began in 2011. That year, the European Commission, following the UN, announced the need to combine humanitarian assistance with development policies, with an emphasis on developing their own resilience strategies to assist developing countries in the face of various types of disasters (e.g., *SHARE – Supporting the Horn of Africa Resilience*; European Commission 2012a).

In “The EU Approach to Resilience: Learning from Food Security Crisis” (European Commission, 2012b) the EU formulated the approach to resilience, which generally does not go beyond the UN discourse. It was suggested to understand resilience as the “ability of an individual, a household, a community, a country or a region to withstand, to adapt, and to quickly recover from stresses and shocks” (European Commission, 2012b). The EU stressed the need to eliminate the causes of crises themselves, necessarily linking actions at the international and regional levels with local and national practices. In April 2014, the Directorate General for Development of the European Commission with the support of the World Bank prepared the guide summarized vari-

ous programs and projects of the European Union, representing examples of applying resilience good practice (*EU Resilience Compendium. Saving lives and livelihoods*, 2014).

Before the adoption of the EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy (EU GFSP), the use of the term “resilience” was limited to certain specific areas. The EU GFSP brought resilience to the level of a key concept, which, on the one hand, reflects the understanding of existential in nature challenges facing a united Europe, but on the other – the presence of recipes in the EU to overcome them. The High Representative F. Mogherini accurately expressed the mood of many in the introduction to the Strategy: “... The purpose, even the existence of our Union has been called into question” (European Union, 2016).

The discussions on resilience within the framework of various international organizations and forums are related by the idea that modern challenges to international development and security are characterized not only by complexity and interconnectedness, but also by a high degree of unpredictability. As B. Anderson notes (Anderson, 2015: 63), resilience can be considered as a way of managing insecurity in the modern world of disasters. Penetration of resilience in the discourses of international organizations is also both a reflection of confusion in the face of regular and difficultly predictable crises, and an attempt to give elites more confidence in the possibility of successfully overcoming them.

In politics and international relations, resilience has been defined as a new form of governance that endorsed the impossibility of predicting threats, shifting away from the logic focused on known threats and prevention of the (post) Cold War period. When applied to societies and organisations, resilience highlights the importance of internal capacities and capabilities as way to cope with crises. The use of the term resilience has increased in foreign policy in recent years and it is mentioned in the UN reports on climate change, disaster-preparedness and development, resilience became a cornerstone of the 2016 EU Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy, which refers to building state and societal resilience among EU neighbours as one of the key strategic priorities of EU foreign policy. It also mirrors one of the key assets of democracies – the ability to reform and adjust without debilitating the system as a whole – through the transfer of power.

Therefore, the resilience is understood in a broad sense as relationships in the system of international relations and the system ability to deal with internal and external disturbances; in a narrower sense it is understood also a system property, a system process or a governance mode. However the resilience can be treated as a state, when the system internally and externally is capable to exist and maintain its stability.

APPLYING RESILIENCE TO THE REGIONAL COOPERATION: THE CASE OF THE BALTIC-BLACK SEA REGION

The Baltic-Black Sea Region (hereafter – the BBSR) is an emerging concept on the political and geopolitical map of Europe raising questions with regard to its existence, structures and future. There is no clear and generally accepted geographic

definition of the Baltic-Black Sea region – in the broad sense all the countries, which belong to both to the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea basins (Turkey, Bulgaria, Romania, Norway, Sweden, etc.) adding to them Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Austria, are included in it; in the narrow sense only the Baltic States, Poland, Ukraine, Romania, Bulgarian, Turkey and Russian Federation comprise the Baltic-Black Sea Region. Also the space between the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea is often called “Intermarium,” but the ambiguity of this geographical definition defines the existence of the geopolitical concept of Joseph Pilsudski with similar term “Międzymorza” (from Polish “Intermarium”).

An important basis for cooperation between the countries of the Baltic-Black Sea region is deep historical traditions of successful coexistence starting from the times of Kyiv Rus and the Byzantine Empire (through the ancient trade routes connecting the Baltic and Black Seas). The origins and existence of the Baltic-Black Sea connections are convincingly evidenced by archaeological findings and monuments in the territory of Volyn (Byzantine and Arabian coins, coins of the Baltic states, banknotes of the Polabo-Pomeranian state), dating from the X-XIth centuries. Strategic military routes from the Baltic to the Black Sea passed through Ukraine. At first they were tied to river systems (the Pripyat, the Western Bug, the Dniester), and subsequently acquired land character “from the Varangians to the Greeks” (Gdansk (Danzig), Pinsk, Berestia, Vladimir, Belgorod, Lutsk, Przemyśl, Zvenigorod, Belz, Sokal, Halych, Terebovlya, Kremenets) (Tersky, 2011: 109).

The Ukrainian historian and first President of Ukraine (1917–1918) Mykhailo Hrushevsky emphasized on the importance of the establishment of closer cooperation between the countries of the Baltic-Black Sea region that would be beneficial for both Ukraine and the region. In the section “Orientation on the Black Sea” of his work “On the threshold of a new Ukraine” Hrushevsky substantiated the “Black Sea prospects” of Ukraine by its historical past.

The founder of Ukrainian political geography Stepan Rudnytsky in his work (“Ukraine from the political and geographical position” (1923), saw the guarantees of the future of Ukrainian state and the region in the close cooperation of the Baltic-Black sea countries. The scientist proved the “historical gravitation” of the Ukrainian people to the peoples of the Black Sea and Baltic Sea regions.

The proposed geopolitical concept almost coincided with the idea of “a cordon sanitaire” put forward by the Italian and French Prime Ministers V. Orlando and J. Clemenceau on January 21, 1919, at the Paris Peace Conference. As Bullitt mentions “To prevent a contagious epidemic from spreading, the sanitarians set up a cordon Sanitaire. If similar measures could be taken against Bolshevism, In order to prevent its spreading, it might be overcome, since to isolate it meant vanquishing it” (Bullitt, 1919: 26).

An attempt to implement the idea of Baltic-Black Sea Union was carried out in 1919 in Riga. Finland, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Belarus, Ukraine were invited to its practical implementation. The program of the Confederation involved cooperation in the spheres of defense, economy, banking and foreign policy. However, Poland refused to participate in this association. After the Russian-Polish War of 1919–1921, Western Galicia and Western Belarus retreated to Poland, and only before the Second

World War (in 1939) these territories were annexed by the USSR, according to a secret Annex to the Covenant of Molotov–Ribbentrop.

At the end of the XXth century, the idea of creating Baltic-Black Sea region/alliance was raised several times: the activation of Baltic-Black Sea cooperation at state level was initiated by the President of Lithuania, A. Brazauskas at the Summit in Vilnius in 1997. The idea was supported and even practically developed on the initiative of the President of Ukraine, Leonid Kuchma to hold a meeting of all interested states in the Crimea in Yalta, in September 1999. In 1999, at the conference in Klaipeda, the Presidents of Lithuania, Ukraine and Poland discussed joint projects to create optimal transit routes which have important geo-economic significance in relations between the Baltic and Black Seas.

Ukraine was particularly interested in accelerating this process – in 1993 the Ukrainian Institute of Society Transformation began to study potential features and advantages of a Baltic-Black Sea partnership. On 10th–11th September 1999, in Yalta a summit was held under the title “Baltic-Black Sea Cooperation: Towards Integrated Europe of the 21st Century without Division Lines.” The representatives of 22 countries of the world in a joint statement stated their desire to make joint efforts to resolve and prevent conflicts, and maintain security and stability, economic cooperation in the Baltic-Black Sea area through participation in joint projects in spheres of energy, transport, communications and ecology. It was agreed to exchange information between the two regional organisations – the Baltic Sea States Council and the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation. This should lead to the identification of priority cooperation areas (*Joint Statement*, 1999).

At the end of XXth century several international institutions were created in the the Baltic-Black Sea region (the Baltic Sea States Council (1992), GUAM – GU(U)AM (1997), Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) (1999)).

The need for cooperation in the Baltic-Black Sea region is emphasized by V. Madisson and V. Shakhov in the monograph “*Modern Ukrainian Geopolitics*” (2003). In their belief, cooperation along the North-South axis will help to strengthen security in this part of Europe.

The effectiveness of regional cooperation is also emphasized by A. Zarubinsky and V. Cherny in the article “*Perspectives of the Baltic-Black Sea Cooperation*” (2005). They stress on the transport potential of the region. Instead, the director of the Institute for Transformation of the Society, O. Soskin, focuses on the following basic modules of the Baltic-Black Sea cooperation: transport related to land freight transportation by rail; the pipeline, the basis of which is the development of a system of international oil pipelines and the formation of an international oil consortium; of maritime transport, which would involve the transformation of the Black Sea into a comprehensive transport system using the experience of maritime transport in the Baltic Sea (Soskin, 2001).

The next step in promoting further cooperation was the international conference “Common vision of common neighbourhood” held in Vilnius on 2nd–5th May 2006, dedicated to the problems of Baltic-Black Sea cooperation. During the summit, organised by the presidents of Lithuania and Poland, Valdas Adamkus and Lech Kaczyński, the heads of States and Governments of the new EU members and NATO (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Bulgaria, Poland and Romania), and the heads of the states from

so-called “new democracies” (Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova) in the presence of the NATO Deputy Secretary General, the EU High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, discussed the prospects and methods of deepening interregional cooperation and exchange of experience in the sphere of democracy and Euro-Atlantic integration.

On 31st October, 2008 in Riga the Baltic to Black Sea Alliance was founded. BBSA aims to facilitate Georgia’s, Ukraine’s and other target countries’ integration into Euroatlantic structures; facilitate the creation of a new international alliance in support for Georgia, Ukraine and other target countries in order to actively assist the secure and democratic development of these countries, etc. (BBSA – official site).

On October 26, 2015 the Association of Constitutional Justice of the Countries of the Baltic and Black Sea Regions (BBCJ) has been established based on the initiative of Constitutional Court of Moldova and the Constitutional Court of Lithuania aiming to promote human rights, independence of constitutional courts, rule of law and mutual exchange of experiences and best practices in constitutional matters. Currently it includes Georgia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland and Ukraine constitutional justices are cooperating to ensure the rule of law, justice and human rights.

Beyond common history and geographical boundaries determining parts of their identities countries of the Baltic-Black Sea region share also set of legal rules and traditional approaches as embedded into their legal systems. Countries so far united under the umbrella of Baltic-Black Sea Region being diverse as to their economic and social characteristics, share nevertheless at least three common features with regards to their contemporary legal systems. Firstly, all countries of the region are full members of the Council of Europe and the Organization of the Security and Cooperation in Europe, meaning that for all parts of this internally diverse region the membership in the Council of Europe as well as the application of the European Convention of Human Rights (hereafter – ECHR) is a unifying element, despite some of them (f.e. Ukraine, Russia, Turkey) show deficiencies in the application and enforcement of European human rights standards as developed by the ECHR and European Court of Human Rights (hereafter – the ECtHR). Secondly, social life and basic relations inside the countries are regulated according to the constitutions, which establish rules for internal power division and county management and identify fundamentals for the legal drafting, law enforcement and legal protection. And thirdly, all the countries in the region inherited rather strong links with Roman legal culture, differing however in the legal culture of their application and enforcement. The differences between the countries in terms of the development of their legal systems can be demonstrated also by a Rule of Law Index, Corruption Perception Index and Social Justice Index, upon which the performance the legal systems can be evaluated. The interim conclusion is that the legal systems of the BSSR countries with the lowest CPI are performing well according Rule of Law Index and Social Justice Index, thus having well-established democratic institutions, high level of protection of human rights and ensuring the application of rule of law concepts in the country, and consequently being capable of sharing their experiences to the less stable countries in legal and political terms.

In order to find some guidance for the BSSR countries joint values and cooperation principles, one can have a look on the constitutional commitments of these states. The

countries of the region have very long-standing constitutional traditions. Irrespectively from the fact whether the constitution of the country is codified or not codified, all these constitutions do not define the ultimate goal of the state providing at the same time fully operational constitutionally based human rights regime based on the European Convention of Human Rights, where human rights and freedoms as well as democratic principles are guaranteed. However differences arise when the real impact and nature of the human rights commitments in the domestic legal orders are to be assessed. In the case of the BBSR countries the human rights as value for the cooperation is also supported by the EU through its human rights policy.

Despite the BBSR countries can be internally grouped by different criteria, f.e. membership in the European Union; common Soviet heritage countries, countries being influenced by Islam legal traditions (Turkey, Azerbaijan), geographic determinants based on Koroma's approach (Koroma 2013), accompanied by the Scandinavian countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway), which follow also own ways in terms of building and functioning of their legal systems, all of them are members of the Council of Europe, and thus agreed to implement the ECHR and relevant ECtHR case-law into their domestic legal orders and follow own ways in fulfilling this obligation. The BBSR region faces among its challenges high political risks linked with unstable political systems among its members in conjunction with mal-functioning legal systems. The mal-functioning legal systems are also as threat for the development of intra-regional ties and cooperation, diminishing the role of law as instrument to able to regulate both the inter-state cooperation and intra-state relations according to jointly inherited or mutually recognized principles and values, and thus build-up regional resilience network based on these considerations.

The debate on joint values for the BBSR can be seen also throughout the lenses on the interstate cooperation in the case of security crises, when collective security instruments need to be applied in order to stabilize the situation. A collective security system is usually defined as mutually agreed assistance, where the aggression against one state is perceived as an aggression against all other states, which are committed to act jointly in order to repeal the aggressor. Usually an interstate arrangement forms a legal basis for the non-aggression commitment and, as Koskieniemi confirms (Koskieniemi, 1996) automatic mutual assistance once in the case of the aggression. The idea of the collective security system is based upon two common features:

- Common understanding and legal definition of aggression as type of the state behavior on international arena linked with use of force as well as common approaches towards the legality of use of force in international relations;
- Mutual assistance practices developed among the states, both of conventional and non-conventional nature, recognized as legal under international law by international community, and connected to the automatic assistance practices.

Even being recognized as international crime under the international law and connected with, as Vazhna (Vazhna, 2016) points out, with the intention of a perpetrating state, it still lacks universally accepted legal procedures for its prosecution. Despite the Rome Statute regulates individual responsibility for committing the crime of aggression, the UN Charter and a number of international documents provide certain benchmarks for state responsibility, the cases of the just and sound litigation in international

and domestic courts in suits regarding illegal use of force in international relations are rather limited (Nicaragua case, however the recent cases Russian aggression against Georgia and Ukraine). Such situation leads to the consequence that states tend to deploy political instruments in solving international disputes, using international law as instrument to protect their interests and ambitions, thus turning law to the warfare mean. The structural weaknesses of international law nowadays underline the necessity for states to look for alternative instruments to guarantee their security in times of hybrid wars and cyber warfare.

Contemporary security systems, as well as the legal arrangements as the ultimate basis for their establishment, are critically assessed as not plausible instruments to secure peace and stability around the world, to prevent wars and to solve international disputes by peaceful means. Particularly wars on European continent (aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, occupation of the Crimea, the Russian war against Georgia) the need for a new security paradigm becomes evident. Moreover, the understanding of the collective security shifted in XX–XXI century very much from being an issue developed and decided by experts to the topic where also public debate matters, especially in the situation when legal rules seem not to provide ultimate and definite answer to the political challenges and security threats. The BBSR countries, being UN members, seem to follow a unified approach on prohibiting use of force in international affairs as key element in their policies.

Beyond all the criticism of the collective security concept, due to its soft-law nature for performing hard-law political commitments in international affairs, it has created a necessary link between values, political aims to be achieved and legal consideration to be deployed when ensuring peace and stability as the ultimate goals of any collective security system.

Despite a number of initiatives to formalize the cooperation among the BBSR states in legal terms, the BBSR as collective security system, as it becomes evident here lacks currently any conventional basis. In the EU, it also can hardly be qualified as legal arrangement, sufficient to constitute the BBSR founding instrument in legal terms with a clause on the mutual assistance in the case of the aggression. The political cooperation among the BBSR countries however has huge potential, thus more flexible forms are needed being able to unite joint positive cooperation experiences, cultural memories and resilience strategies.

29 years passed since the dissolution of the USSR and that period showed that the main obstacle in the creation of effective regional BBSR union/alliance were the outdated approaches of the ideologists of the BBSR, the resource availability of this project, the more attractive European integration and the active opposition of Russia to any alternative integration projects. An outdated approach was to consider the BBSR as a neutral or transit territory without looking for a specific regional role. However, in the post-Soviet period the need for a regional projects such as BBSR clearly crystallized, though there are discussions regarding its institutional content. As a quite successful European Union was originally based on the creation of common sectoral markets, and after that it was institutionally filled and refined, the countries of the BBSR are under considerable pressure due to Russian aggression, which makes it important to coordinate joint actions to protect their sovereignty. In the area of cooperation with

Turkey, it is advisable to focus on the construction of a highway around the Black Sea, which will be “tied” to the Caspian hub, and further logistics will be developed in China. In this context, it should be noted that China views the North Black Sea region as part of the Great Silk Road.

Therefore, the basis of the merger is not economic, but security. On the other hand, the prospect of close integration with the EU market and the opportunity for discussion on security issues from the United States, moves this project into the realm of subregional integration. The key issue in this discourse is the ability to unite countries of the BBSR to address specific security challenges where military and energy security are the primary focus. The gradual institutionalization of this process is the only alternative to global strategies that do not place countries in the region as fully fledged actors in international politics. The region’s security issues have long been de facto within Russia’s area of responsibility. The most important thing for the security of the BBSR is the delegation of responsibility to the countries most interested in sustainable development and stability within and outside the region. This is possible with a comprehensive solution to the issues of Transnistria, the Crimea, war in the Eastern Ukraine, in the perspective of the Kaliningrad enclave and the Caucasus. The main prerequisite for this is the increase in the military weight of the BBSR, which will be achieved through the demilitarization of the Western Europe and transfer of NATO bases to Eastern Europe. Today, these processes are already taking place, and Western European countries annually reduced military expenditures in the post-cold war period, transferring funds to the humanities spheres. But Eastern European countries increased funding for the security sector as they reformed their policies according to NATO standards. The intensification of the military activities in the East of Ukraine accelerated these trends, in particular, NATO increased its military contingent and armaments in the Baltic States, Romania and Poland. Russia is still trying to impose a dialogue on the distribution of areas of responsibility in Eastern Europe with the countries of Western Europe, but the countries of the BBSR have accumulated enough geopolitical and resource capacity to counteract this.

The Baltic-Black Sea region in particular and much of the Eurasian continent need economic, political and security reformatting. The specifics of the current security crisis is largely unfolding in the context of globalization, that is a dramatic increase in the degree of interdependence of the subjects of international politics. This requires an increase in the level of international responsibility of the members of the international relations system. The main security challenge for the Baltic-Black Sea region can be tempered by the notion that the Euro-Atlantic community is trying to extend its soft influence to neighboring territories, Russia is afraid to communicate on its borders with safe Euro-Atlantic structures and the countries located at the border of the EU and Russia are trying within their domestic political capabilities to improve integration with the Euro-Atlantic camp, as it helps to respond more effectively to current civilizational challenges and enables access to resources and the latest technologies.

The main issues that unite the countries of the region are information, military and energy security also creating a joint market within the framework of the EaP and cooperation in the areas of import and export substitution in trade with the Russian Federation, to which Belarus may be attracted in the short term, are the most realistic.

Despite the fact that every country in the region has its own perceptions of forms of cooperation that do not always coincide – diversification of dependence on Russia is a common position for all of them.

Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania may soon raise the issue of the institutionalization of a new tactical alliance, which could start with the signing of the Baltic-Black Sea doctrine. Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland need to address a broad range of issues within the framework of tripartite meetings, implementation of which should become the nucleus of the Baltic-Black Sea cooperation and then consider ways of involving Belarus and third countries.

The diversity of approaches in the vision of an ideal security situation, makes it relevant to create a platform to discuss and develop a common position. The potential of such a move may not be the most optimal to address all current threats, but it is sufficient to create an agenda and move to more responsible forms of cooperation based on regional policy actions. This can potentially lead to some contradictions at the global level, but at the regional level, it will have a stabilizing effect in the short and medium term.

The transit location of the BBSR is of geopolitical interest of large states and geo-economic blocs. Most countries see it as a regional project that carries an economic and transit burden. However, it is understandable that the economy can only function in a safe and secure environment. In the broad interpretation, the BBSR has a political and strategic component (defense, economic, communicative). This alliance should be a counterweight to a common external enemy, the Russian Federation, which poses a real military threat in the region. As noted above, the future BBSR geopolitical region should include security component as a basis.

Ukraine is geographically located between East and West. This is an extremely advantageous geopolitical location that has not yet been fully realized. Security issues for Ukraine in the current geopolitical situation are extremely important in terms of Russian-Ukrainian War which started in 2014 with the annexation of the Crimea. Ukraine sees the BBSR as a hotbed of security for itself and for the whole European continent.

The idea of developing Baltic-Black Sea cooperation for Ukraine is attractive for several reasons. First, as noted above, the Black Sea region itself has significant potential, primarily due to the use of its shelf, which will enable it to extract oil and gas on its own. Within the framework of regional cooperation with Turkey, there is an opportunity to develop the metallurgical industry. A promising area of cooperation is ecology. In the Baltic direction, it is advisable to take on the experience of Poland and the Baltic States in reforming, modernizing and diversifying the energy sector, etc. Secondly, cooperation in transport, transit and communication is grounded in terms of logistics. Already in 2003 together with Lithuania and Belarus within the international framework transport corridor No. 9, the Viking railway project on the Illichivsk–Klaipeda route was launched. This corridor, provided it is docked the ferry line that connects Ukraine and Turkey can reach the Middle East. The Latvian initiative to restore the shortest waterway Daugava–Dnipro and the Libava–Romna rail link existing since 1874, as well as the Estonian proposal to use the opportunities of the developed ports of Estonia to expand relations with the Scandinavian countries, should not be underestimated.

Thirdly, the security aspect is important, as a large part of the countries of the region are bordering either the European Union or Russia. Thus, in modern conditions cooperation in defense and security sphere are extremely important and of mutual benefit both for Ukraine and the Baltic States and Poland.

Contemporary events of local and global nature are forcing Ukraine to find its own place in the global geopolitical structure. The turbulence of world politics, taking over Ukraine, confirmed J. Rosenau's thesis that all the events that occur locally, are reflected globally. Therefore, the war between Russia and Ukraine has shaken the international system and called into question the current international order. However, despite the difficult conditions, Ukraine has a chance to realize itself as a full-fledged actor of international politics and take its own place in geopolitical structure of the world, mainly in the BBSR.

The BBSR as a resilient system can be currently analyzed in terms of its strong and weak elements, opportunities and risks connected, and represented as follows:

- Strengths – shared historical heritage of the countries belonging to the region; long traditions of coexistence and negotiation potential; international law as preferred instrument to regulate the interstate interaction in the region; clearly articulated interests in transit (mainly gas from the Caspian region) and trade increase; high economic development potential.
- Weaknesses – no internal management and political centres responsible for the BBSR management; no clear vision regarding BBSR concept and structure as a unified region; countries with low economic growth, social difficulties in the societies; political uncertainty and instability (e.g. Ukraine, Georgia).
- Opportunities – sectoral cooperation in the region (transit, economy, ecology, security, infrastructure); peaceful settlement of the (un)frozen conflicts (e.g. Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine, Azerbaijan); prevention of human trafficking, combating of organized crime; potential for regional resilience and sustainable development.
- Threats – strong intra-regional diversity and high conflict potential; unstable political systems with high risks to transform into undemocratic political regimes; corruption and mal-functioning legal systems in the region; Russian Federation aggressive foreign policy and seeing BBSR as a sphere of its interests and influence; migration/refugee crisis (BBSR as a transit route to the EU).

The diversity of approaches in the vision of an ideal security situation, makes it relevant to create a platform to discuss and develop a common position. The potential of such a move may not be the most optimal to address all current threats, but it is sufficient to create an agenda and move to more responsible forms of cooperation based on regional policy actions. This can potentially lead to some contradictions at the global level, but at the regional level, it will have a stabilizing effect in the short and medium term.

CONCLUSIONS

Analyzing the cooperation within the BBSR countries it can be concluded that it actually shares basic elements of a multi-governance model. First of all, the BBSR

cooperation is deeply rooted in historical contexts of the interstate cooperation in XX–XXI centuries and into the history of political ideas about strengthening the regional cooperation network in economic/political matters of this period. In XX century the collapse of the Soviet Union has been a major challenge for the BBSR states, which resulted in the need to re-think their cooperation inside the region specified and to develop them in new political realities of non-bipolar political order in Europe, and thus to continue to exist as states on international arena. In XXI century the BBSR countries face again a shock of military conflict in Europe, on its Eastern border, which became realized by them as political and existential threat in the case of the Russian aggression against Ukraine. In the context of contemporary geopolitical challenges and threats security components such as political (connected to the institutionalization debate of the region, where regional leaders still need to be identified), informational (combating propaganda and disinformation), military (mutual assistance under NATO auspices or within the EU security paradigms/assistance modes) and economic (infrastructure, transport and networks) can be assumed as core elements of the resilience in the BBSR region.

Secondly, it involved and currently involves a variety of stakeholders interested in it pursuing the idea of a strong and united region. At the state level ideas of strengthening intra-regional relations has been expressed by Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, Latvia; at the level of civic society ideas of pursuing is also supported and expressed. Moreover, the sectors for potential cooperation of the BBSR countries seem to be identified in terms of building-up mutually beneficial collaboration in fields of transport, energy supply and solving conflicts in Eastern Europe. Negotiations on these issues in a variety of formats are driven both by countries and interest groups inside them, as well as by the EU which tries to analyze and foster this cooperation quite moderately. Fostering the BBSR countries cooperation has no clear timelines for future, as well as it remains usually within the country's foreign policy domains. The cooperation of the BBSR countries is also very spare with ultimate results as such, however countries seemed to identify key priority areas for future efforts in its strengthening (transport, energy, security, maritime issues) being based on common values *expressis verbis* shared by countries in human rights, democracy and rule of law, prohibition of use of force and achieving sustainable and stable social and economic development.

Analyzing the interstate cooperation among the BBSR countries one may assume that the resilience-building strategies might be suitable instrument to facilitate interstate relations around Black Sea and Baltic Sea. The resilience strategies due to their country-based and needs-tailored nature can be taken into consideration while analyzing the fact the ultimate legal regulation of the relations between the BBSR countries might not be needed at the current stage of the relations. Moreover, it can also handle the reality of missed institutionalization of the interstate relations in the BBSR region in the case that countries are not ready neither politically nor economically and socially to set ad hoc or permanent institutional framework. The selective approach towards regional cooperation priorities and countries' domestic agendas allow for enhanced flexibility in the cooperation without prejudices regarding the fulfillment/non-fulfillment of lacking legal commitments, as well as enhanced flexibility in policy-making in the region. Such selective approach might end-up with lack of joint decisions or

very sporadic decision-making on regional cooperation priorities routed mainly in the coexistence of state interests on case-to-case basis. It is also followed by a lack of an ultimate decision-making centre and financial resources invested jointly into the development of the BBSR cooperation are also lacking. Even on the very limited areas the BBSR ideas currently involves non-state actors to support the regional cooperation (CDC, BBSA, BBSJ), local businesses and academia. The BBSR ideas can serve as a starting point to develop joint resilience strategies to treat challenges the region faces in terms of security and sustainable development as issues of prime concern of the region's countries. The BBSR idea and resilience strategies for the BBSR region seem to be exposed to such threats as the escalation of the war at the Eastern border of Ukraine, other intra-regional conflicts (f. Transnistria), being linked f.e. to lack of joint definition of the crime of aggression, which would be mutually recognized, articulated and followed by the countries in the region.

Ukraine is geographically between East and West. This is an extremely advantageous geopolitical location that has not yet been fully realized. An independent Ukraine must recognize and evaluate existing threats to its national security in a timely manner and adequately respond to them. Security issues for Ukraine in the current geopolitical situation should be raised in foreign policy as they were neglected in the assessment of military threats that led to the Russian-Ukrainian War of 2014 and the annexation of the Crimea. The hope for a positive resolution of the military conflict with Russia for Ukraine should be substantiated and based on military capabilities. The issue of defense and security comes first. Ukraine needs to create a new geopolitical space around its territory, to become a hotbed of security for the Baltic-Black Sea region.

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ABSTRACT

The conceptual bases of resilience in modern political science are analyzed, including the key conceptual approaches that are used in academic studies for understanding the policy of resilience, characterizing the reaction of subjects to stress or threat of any kind and origin. The concept of resilience is applied to analyze the cooperation among the Baltic-Black Sea countries as a regional interaction model which should be formed in order to reduce or avoid security crises.

The Baltic-Black Sea countries have developed and formed strong ties in different dimensions among one another, opening an opportunity for intellectual adventures in the area of the conceptualization of their interaction modes under the regional cooperation frameworks. Based upon the analyzed doctrinal views and available documentary backgrounds on resilience in the UN and the EU, the possible visions and scenarios for the creation of the Baltic-Black Sea region as a resilient one are given. The existing and potential obstacles to cooperation in the region are highlighted. The main threats and challenges for the Baltic-Black Sea region at present are investigated.

Keywords: resilience, security, UN, EU, Baltic-Black Sea region

REGION MORZA BAŁTYCKIEGO I CZARNEGO JAKO REGION ODPORNY: ASPEKTY POLITYCZNE I BEZPIECZEŃSTWA

STRESZCZENIE

W artykule przeanalizowano koncepcyjne podstawy odporności we współczesnych naukach politycznych, w tym kluczowe podejścia koncepcyjne stosowane w badaniach naukowych zmierzających do zrozumienia polityki odporności, charakteryzujące reakcję badanych na stres lub zagrożenie dowolnego rodzaju i pochodzenia. Pojęcie odporności zastosowano do analizy współpracy między krajami regionu Morza Bałtyckiego i Czarnego jako regionalnego modelu interakcji, który należałoby utworzyć w celu ograniczenia lub uniknięcia kryzysów bezpieczeństwa.

Kraje regionu Morza Bałtyckiego i Czarnego stworzyły i rozwinęły łączące je na różnych płaszczyznach silne więzi, co otwiera okazję do intelektualnego przedsięwzięcia w zakresie

konceptualizacji trybów interakcji występujących między nimi w ramach współpracy regionalnej. W oparciu o przeanalizowane poglądy doktrynalne i dostępną dokumentację dotyczącą odporności w ONZ i UE, przedstawiono możliwe wizje i scenariusze utworzenia regionu Morza Bałtyckiego i Czarnego jako regionu odpornego. Wskazano na istniejące i potencjalne przeszkody we współpracy w regionie. Zbadano aktualnie występujące główne zagrożenia i wyzwania dla regionu Morza Bałtyckiego i Czarnego.

Słowa kluczowe: odporność, bezpieczeństwo, ONZ, UE, region Morza Bałtyckiego i Czarnego